

REPORT
OF THE
POSTMASTER GENERAL

IN ANSWER TO

A resolution of the Senate relative to the lists of Post Offices, regulations, &c., published by George S. Gideon in 1855, and by John C. Rives in 1857.

JUNE 4, 1858.—Ordered to lie on the table and be printed.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
June 3, 1858.

SIR: In answer to the inquiries made by the Senate's resolution of the 27th ultimo, relative to the lists of post offices, regulations, &c., published by George S. Gideon in 1855, and by John C. Rives in 1857, I have the honor to state, that in those years there having been no specific appropriation for the compilation and printing of a manual of that kind, copies of those books were purchased for the use of the department. Neither of them is strictly official, both having been prepared and published on private account. But it being necessary to supply postmasters with new lists of post offices, and believing that the regulations annexed to the lists in those volumes were generally correct copies of the official regulations of the department, this course was adopted as the most feasible and much the cheapest mode of securing that object. The volume of 1855 was sent, during that and the following year, to many of the department's agents and to several thousand postmasters; and that of 1857 to all its agents and postmasters. It is unnecessary to say that neither of these books was intended to supersede the last official edition of the laws and regulations of the department, published in 1852, which, together with such official regulations as have since been adopted and furnished by means of printed circulars, is still in use for the guide and government of postmasters in the discharge of their duties. Of the regulations specified in the Senate resolution, No. 53 is identical with No. 153 of the official edition, and Nos. 75 and 117 have been promulgated by official circulars; but Nos. 52 and 110, as given in the private editions, have never been promulgated by the department, either through circulars or its recognized book of laws and regulations. In so far,

therefore, as the regulations attached to these lists of post offices differ from those issued by circular or in the official book of 1852, they must be considered as unofficial.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

AARON V. BROWN.

Hon. JOHN C. BRECKENRIDGE,
Vice-President of the United States.